



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES PARK POLICE
Headquarters
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

IN REPLY REFER TO:

A7221 (NPS-PPPD)

05 OCT '05 18:18

Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Minority Member, United States House of Representatives
2142 Rayborn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Conyers:

This is in response to your recent inquiry of September 27, 2005, regarding the treatment of individuals arrested on September 26, 2005, in front of the White House and processed at the United States Park Police Anacostia Station.

While we strive to process prisoners within three hours, the significant number of individuals arrested on September 27th required an unavoidable delay in the processing. The prisoners were detained and processed in accordance with Force policies. These prisoners were never held captive; rather they were arrested and processed in accordance with established policies, as all of our prisoners are. Our procedures are designed to protect the prisoners, our police officers and to minimize contact between mass-arrest prisoners and those arrested for other offenses. Although the individuals arrested on September 27th were handcuffed, they were treated with respect and courtesy at all times.. During the period between arrest and release we provided food and escorts to the facilities for the prisoners, as circumstances allowed.

Prior to this demonstration taking place, we had discussions with the organizers to explain the procedures of mass-arrests. These procedures were acknowledged by the organizers of this demonstration. During these discussions, we were led to believe there would be approximately 200 individuals who would violate the regulation by demonstrating without a permit resulting in an arrest. Had we have known the number would be approximately 400; we would have had additional officers on duty to assist with the processing of the prisoners.

The following are answers to your specific questions concerning these arrests:

1) The Anacostia Station was the sole processing facility for several logistical reasons:

The Anacostia Operations Facility (AOF) is our largest and most up-to-date processing facility and as such is designated as our mass-arrest processing location. Processing all the arrestees at AOF allowed us to centralize our resources, and the resources of any assisting agency, in one

location. Also, these prisoners were processed at the AOF to segregate them from criminals of a more violent nature that may be processed at our other facilities.

These resources/needs included:

- The providing of porta-jons for the arrestee's
- The positioning of a D.C. Fire Ambulance to treat any person experiencing a medical emergency
- The provision of food and beverage to the arrestee's
- A central location where all inquiries about an arrestee's status could be answered. It would have been more complicated and confusing for the protest organizers to try and provide follow-up transportation or any other type of assistance to the arrestee's if they had been taken to several sites instead of one central location.

2) To our knowledge this is the greatest number of arrests made by the United States Park Police in a single incident in over 30 years. In this incident, the subjects were arrested for "Demonstrating Without a Permit". Each arrestee was processed in accordance with established policies and issued a violation notice that stated the charge and the option to pay the collateral or appear in court. Only in a very unusual circumstance, such as this where almost 400 prisoners had to be processed, would a prisoner be held 12 hours by our agency.

Additionally, it is important to note that only a small portion of the arrestees were held 12 hours. Those individuals who were transported in the first bus loads from the arrest site were released within a few hours of their arrest. As soon as a person completed processing, they were released. This was an ongoing process throughout the night.

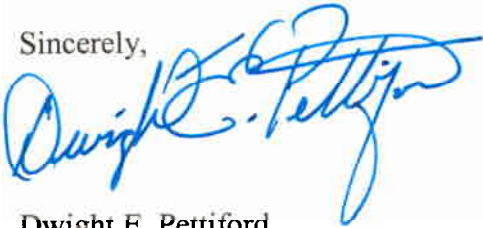
3) As mentioned above, this was by far the greatest number of arrests made by the United States Park Police in a single incident in more than 30 years. It is possible that in other mass arrest situations, prisoners may have been handcuffed on buses for extended periods of time. However, in this case, as in all other cases, we processed the arrestees as expeditiously and humanely as possible. For example, by 1:00 am, the number of prisoners was reduced to a manageable number and at that time all remaining prisoners were unhandcuffed and held in an open sally-port until such time as they were individually processed.

4) The United States Park Police has written policies that dictate the procedures for mass-arrests and our officers acted in accordance with these established procedures. In every instance, the officers of the United States Park Police treated the arrestees with respect and courtesy. In addition, it is not the practice of this agency—nor of any other law enforcement agency of which we are aware-- to provide return transportation for prisoners once they are released. However, because the processing of some prisoners was lengthy, Metro buses remained on-site at the facility and provided transportation to some of those released.

Page 3
John Conyers, Jr.

I hope this response provides a satisfactory explanation of the events occurring in connection with these mass-arrests. If we may be of any further assistance, please feel free to contact me at 202.619.7350.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dwight E. Pettiford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dwight" being the most prominent.

Dwight E. Pettiford
Chief of Police